1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

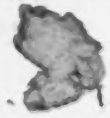
which lies due north of Raga, constituted for the Small Islanders, before the coming of the white man, the utmost limits of the world. Each had, and still has in their eyes, its special character.

Thus, Ambrim is first and foremost the home of the dead of high rank, who, wandering from the Small Islands down the east coast of Malekula, are transported by a ghostly ferryman to the opposite shore, whence they climb on to the volcano and there carry on life after death. This island (among the natives inhabiting whose shores Deacon discovered the 6-section systems of kinship already mentioned) forms part of the predominately patrilineal area to which Malekula and the Small Islands also belong. In this area, though matrilineal descent is given due weight, the overt organisation is patrilineal with patrilocal residence, that is to say that all men remain within their father's village and marry women from other villages. To this patrilineal area belongs also the southern part of Raga regarding which Père Tattevin has written an important memoir. These islands of Malekula and Ambrim, together with the southern part of Raga, are collectively referred to as the North-Central New Hebrides.

Immediately to the north are the Northern New Hebrides, in all of which overt descent is matrilineal, and in which society is based on what is called a dual organisation consisting of two exogamous matrilineal moieties. This division between an overtly patrilineal area in the south and a matrilineal dual organisation area in the north embraces both branches of the archipelago, the dividing line running due east and west between Malo and Malekula on the one hand and across the middle of Raga on the other. In the minds of the Small Islanders the dual organisation is particularly connected with the islands to the north-east, namely North Raga, Oba and Maewo, all of which are also regarded as the home of the creator-deity known in the Northern New Hebrides as Tagaro and in Vao as Ta-ghar. Particularly is this the case with regard to Oba, to which special pilgrimages are made for the sake of initiation into sex, and which white men have called Lepers Island on account of the light, almost Polynesian coloured skin of its inhabitants.

To the north-west lie Malo and the large island of Santo with its very mixed population, who, though also in the dual organisation area, by no means share the reverential attitude accorded to the inhabitants of the north-eastern islands and are visited chiefly on account of the turmeric which they produce and which is used by the Small Islanders as a basic dye for their few articles of clothing. Students of European colonial expansion will remember that the full name of Santo is Terra Australis del Espiritu Santo, so called by Quiros when in 1606 he, the first white man to sight it, landed to found New Jerusalem on a site now entirely lost.

Northward of the New Hebrides lie the two small archipelagos called the Banks and Torres Islands, which are beyond the ken of the



1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OOl2 Malekula OOl2

Small Islanders. These islands also form part of the dual organisation area, and were the seat of Codrington's main work. Northward of these, with a gap of some 150 miles, are the Santa Cruz Islands, famous for their feather money, some 200 miles to the westward of which lies San Christoval, the most southerly of the large Solomon Islands, whence it would be possible to reach the Asiatic continent without once losing sight of land.

Seasons.

The climate of the New Hebrides is one of the least variable in the world, leading, among other interesting results, to the fact that there is no regular breeding-season for birds, each species having adapted its life-cycle differently to conditions which allow of breeding at almost any time of the year.[1] Being somewhat aside from the main track of cyclones, it is on the whole rather less unhealthy than most parts of Melanesia. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the climate is uniformly moist and rain may fall any day of the year, two main seasons are sufficiently clearly marked off to have an important bearing on the economic and ritual life of the natives. The first coincides with the south-east trade wind that blows from about the middle of May till the end of October, with July as the coolest month, which, under favourable circumstances, somewhat resembles high summer in England. During these months, when there is almost always a cool breeze and sea and sky dazzle in the sunlight, the islands are comparatively free from malaria and the white man is grateful for a blanket at night. These are also for the natives of the Small Islands the months of plenty, during which the main yam crops are dug up and harvested, and during which most of the elaborate ritual activities take place. Towards the end of this season the marine annelid which white men call *palolo* appears during the night at certain phases of the moon. This phenomenon, heralded by the flowering of the erythrina tree in July, is eagerly watched for by the natives at certain stages of the moon's cycle during August and September, and its chief appearance on the twentieth night of the October-November moon is also the time when the dead return to visit the living, and marks the beginning of the New Year.[2]

This also marks the end of the comparatively cool, dry season. Now the prevailing wind veers round to the north-west, bringing with it a sultry equatorial heat. Clouds cover the sky, though still with intervals of brilliant sunshine, till in December squalls become frequent, continuing throughout January and culminating in February in the nearest approach to cyclones which these islands experience. This is also as a rule the hottest month of the year, and that in which fever and diseases are apt

[1] See the works of Dr. John Baker and Mr. T. H. Harrisson.

[2] The word *palolo* is probably of Samoan origin. Much misconception exists among white men regarding the appearance of this annelid. A detailed description of its various appearances and of its influence on the native calendar will be given in a future volume on Atchin.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

the progressive increase in skill in the rearing of tuskers (another feature to be discussed later), these have on the whole improved in quality during each successive generation, and the memory of these improvements, resulting in ever greater curvature of the tusks, adds to the prestige of those who sacrificed them and also to that of their descendants. These facts, handed down from father to son, together with the ancestral stone monuments standing in every village dancing-ground, form a historical framework by the aid of which the natives of the Small Islands preserve a mass of information regarding their past history, and of the personalities and exploits of their ancestors. Since most of the facts so preserved are centred round the successive performances of the Maki, there can be no doubt at all that this historical sense is part and parcel of the megalithic culture it represents. There is also very little doubt that it is closely connected with patrilineal descent, for in Vao, where patrilineal descent has been comparatively recently introduced and the dolmen representing the female principle is still the chief monument erected, the genealogies do not go back more than nine generations. In Atchin, on the contrary, where patrilineal influence is stronger and monoliths representing the male principle have largely supplanted the former use of the dolmen as the chief sacrificial monument, they go back nineteen generations to the slaying by two brothers of an aboriginal man-eating ogre named Ias associated with an older layer of culture, memories of which still survive in South Raga, where legends are told of mythical baby-snatchers called ias, and the same word is used also as an honourable title for successful killers of men.[1] The two Atchin brothers said to have killed Ias nineteen generations ago were clearly the last representatives on this island of the former system of overt matrilineal descent, since their successor Iwas was their sister's son, and it was this man Iwas who introduced the existing system of overt patrilineal descent through which the inhabitants of the chief village on this now patrilocal island trace kinship with him, the youngest boy at the time of my visit belonging to the seventeenth generation of his descendants in the direct male line.

"STONE MEN"

The importance of monoliths in tracing descent is due almost certainly to the fact discussed on p. 699, that these monuments, now consisting of plain coral blocks, for the most part undressed, represent what at one time in the history of this culture were stone statues carved to represent the dead. Thus some of the monoliths erected for the higher ranks in the district of Seniang in South-West Bay (which in turn were derived,

[1] Tattevin, 1, 1926, pp. 409, 410; also 6, 1931, Tales XXIX, p. 879 and XXX, pp. 880-1. The same personage figures in the mythology of Oba as the man-eating ogre Taso (Codrington, 3, pp. 398-402).

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

as already stated, from Lambumbu, some twenty miles up the coast) are still carved to represent most parts of the human figure, while on those set up for some of the lower though still elevated ranks the carving is restricted to mere representations of the human face. This would explain the phenomenon already mentioned that is found all over Malekula, that the ghosts of all ancestors who have previously performed the rite inhabit or hover near these monoliths. This belief in the in-dwelling of the ghosts of the dead in stone, well known in many forms of megalithic culture, has, in Malekula and the surrounding islands, been extended in two directions. In the first place, any natural coral or stone block of unusually large dimensions or otherwise interesting appearance is apt to be indicated as the dwelling-place, or even the petrified person, of some mythical hero. This is particularly the case in those districts observing the later forms of Maki ritual in which monoliths are the chief type of monument erected. Thus on Atchin the Guardian Ghost, who, for reasons given below, is thought to be a woman, is conceived of in two different ways. In the first place, she is thought of as a culture-heroine who once lived on the island and, as such, is represented by a very ancient dressed monolith standing by the roadside at the site of what was once part of the chief village but which has since been abandoned, and by the side of this is another dressed monolith representing her daughter. In the second place, she is, however, thought of as the mythological Being already described who stands ready to devour the ghosts of the dead if not duly propitiated, and in this capacity is in the Atchin and Wala versions of the story [1] conceived of as dwelling in a great natural coral block standing on the reef forty miles away down the coast of Malekula at a spot whence the dead of all the Small Islands who have duly performed all the necessary rites take their departure to the Land of the Dead situated in the crater of the great active volcano on Ambrim. In the same way her ten mythical grandsons who are among the chief culture-heroes on Atchin are to be seen today in the form of ten coral rocks of varying shape and size on the coast of that island. Yet other culture-heroes, many of whose names begin with the syllable *Bat* meaning "stone," are said to have been coral blocks capable of detaching themselves from the surrounding reef and travelling to and fro between Atchin and certain other islands whence their descendants are said to have come.

Finally, among the Big Nambas inhabiting the North Malekulan plateau, this quality is shared even by living men whose ancestry is of particular importance, as seen in the fact reported by Miss Cheesman that the chiefs of at least one village in this district all have the same syllable, here pronounced *Pat*, suffixed to their personal names.[2]

[1] For a comparison of this story with that told on Vao, see pp. 218 ff.

[2] Cheesman, p. 181. This name is probably also equivalent to *Ambat* and *Kwat* (see pp. 209, 493).

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

Other cases of the in-dwelling of ancestors in stone will be met with in the course of this work, and it is for this reason, coupled with the natives' absorption in megalithic ritual, that I have chosen the title "Stone Men of Malekula."

DIFFUSION OF MEGALITHIC CULTURE

How this megalithic culture came to be present in Malekula and its neighbouring islands it is outside the scope of this work to enquire. It may on the one hand be the case that this corner of Melanesia represents an isolated backwater left behind from the great stream of megalithic culture that Dr. W. J. Perry and the late Professor Sir Grafton Elliot Smith consider to have originated in the ancient centres of civilisation and to have been borne along maritime routes to the Malay Archipelago and thence across the Pacific to Easter Island and to the American continent where it gave the impetus which led to the rise of the great pre-Columbian cultures. There are of course many pitfalls in handling a subject of such magnitude, and particularly in defining what megalithic culture is. It must be remembered that this phrase covers many aspects of culture other than the mere use of stone monuments, as these writers never cease to point out and as their detractors constantly ignore. The phrase "megalithic culture" is thus used to refer to a very definite culture-complex for which no better name exists, and is convenient simply because the stone monuments are the most durable aspect of it in a world in which material objects not only outlive their creators but are also so much more easy to observe and describe than the ideas which give rise to their creation. Another difficulty arises as to the size of the stone monuments referred to, since there is clearly at first sight a considerable difference between the chambered galleries of the Mediterranean area and the dolmens of Vao, between Cleopatra's Needle and small monoliths, or between the stepped ziggurats of Mesopotamia and the stone-platforms of Malekula. A point in common, however, about all these and innumerable similar monuments over a wide area is that, comparatively small as may be those found in outlying places such as Cornwall on the one hand or the New Hebrides on the other, they are in no case the work of individual men but are the result of a communal effort which, not being utilitarian in the material sense, indicates a religious attitude sufficiently deep-rooted to justify the considerable labour entailed in their erection. Since some phrase must be used to describe this widespread phenomenon (and in a work which is purely descriptive of Small Island culture no obligation rests on the author to prosecute comparative studies), the phrase "megalithic" is here used quite non-committally to refer to monuments erected from a religious motive of stones too large to be lifted by hand but need-

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

escape these currents are unmixed with this and therefore called "white sand." On these same currents float the pieces of pumice-stone that the natives use for various purposes, including the removal of superfluous hair from their chins, while from the island of Ambrim itself is brought in canoes the hard volcanic stone from which rain-stones (see Plate XXIV, 1) are carved. The Ambrim volcano plays, moreover, a very active part in beliefs concerning the home of the dead held in the Small Islands, whence (though Vao, the most northerly of these islets, lies forty miles away) all the dead of high rank are said to journey down the east coast of Malekula and over the ten-mile strait to Ambrim, where they climb up to the crater and there for evermore dance every night and rest sleeping by day. Rivers in fact goes so far as to suggest that the presence of volcanoes such as this and others in Melanesia may to some extent have determined the settlement of early migrants from other volcanic areas having similar beliefs.

Like all New Hebridean islands, however, apart from the smoke sometimes issuing from the crater and the accompanying dull red glow which is by no means always present, Ambrim, as well as the opposing Malekulan coast, wears the monotonous dark green mantle of bush growing right down to the water's edge, showing no sign of the life going on in the native villages which it engulfs. At most points approach is dangerous even at a distance, owing to the treacherous reefs that jut out sometimes far into the sea. On one of these, sprawling out from the Malekulan promontory of Bong-na-un near Pangkumu, there stands a giant upright coral block, which, according to the belief held in some of the Small Islands, represents the Guardian Ghost waiting to devour the ghosts of the dead unless propitiated with the gift of a pig, which in turn is the ghost of one sacrificed by surviving kinsmen at the dead man's grave.[1] It is from here that, having passed this ordeal, the dead man gathers fuel with which to light a beacon to attract the attention of the ghostly ferryman on Ambrim who will conduct him to the opposite shore, and any small pieces of driftwood or dried banana skins that may be seen floating off it are said by the natives to be his canoes.

After this, the heavy coastline continues unrelieved by islands till a long low promontory stretching out into the sea encloses a wide mangrove shark-infested swamp behind which, in the low foothills, are said to live sorcerers called Ghamba Lep,[2] capable of flight and of assuming the shape of snakes and other things and of so harming the dwellers of the mainland villages.

[1] This is the belief held in Atchin and Wala which contrasts with the Vao belief (see p. 13) that the Guardian Ghost is met with in the cave. For further information on this see pp. 227, 233.

[2] See p. 238.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

could he—a thing that never enters the native mind—be affected by supplication or coercion. Thus, though his light (of the moon, or sun) is greeted with joy when it appears, he is in no way responsible for climatic or meteorological vagaries. The natives "affirm that Ta-ghar, with his clouds and winds, has no power to cause rain to fall." [1] For this, or even to make the sun shine, it is necessary to resort to magic, which operates only through the assistance of a continuous line of previous, now dead, practitioners.

Thus Ta-ghar is never appealed to, nor are there any rites connected with him, but he is simply there.

Ta-ghar pleads with Le-hev-hev to let the ghosts of the dead pass into the land of the dead.

The only action, apart from just existing, and of begetting children by the moon, which he is reported ever to take is when, under the specialised name Ta-ghar Lawo, he intercedes with the Guardian Ghost Le-hev-hev in order that this Being may let the ghost of a dead man proceed on his way to the land of the dead; for which favour the new ghost makes him a present of a pig, the ghost of one killed during his mortuary rites. This incident will be described in the next section.[2]

Summary of Characteristics

To sum up, Ta-ghar appears in two aspects:

(*a*) As a mythical hero arriving in a canoe, whence he distributes food-stuffs and pigs, together with instructions how to rear them, and then sails away, betraying distinctly human feelings by accepting the companionship of a woman. The islands of Maewo, Oba and Raga are regarded as his home, and youths from all the Small Islands perform a pilgrimage to one or other of them for the sake of being initiated into the mysteries of sex.

(*b*) As a deity with the following attributes:

(i) Is creator of all men and things.
(ii) Lives in the moon, where his image may be recognised in the dark marks we call "the man in the moon."
(iii) Lights up the moon.
(iv) Begets all human children by the moon, which is called "grandmother," whence, when ready, the children fall into their mothers' wombs, which are the portal through which they come to the light of day.

[1] But see p. 634.

[2] See below, p. 227.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

776

(v) Secondarily, and by analogy, as luminary, associated with the sun and to a lesser degree with the stars, and, by yet further analogy, with the clouds and winds.

(vi) Through his association with the sun makes trees and plants to grow; but has no control over the weather.

(vii) Is definitely not a ghost (*ta-mat*), though like one in respect of the fact that he has no body.

(viii) Is the object of no cult or supplication, but is accepted as in all ways good.

(*B*) LE-HEV-HEV, THE GUARDIAN GHOST

"*That which draws us to It so that It may devour us.*"

Having failed to discover any marked emotional attitude on the part of the natives towards Ta-ghar, Godefroy asked:

"Who then is it that you do think of?"

And was met with the reply:

"Of that other, of that which wishes to devour us as soon as we are dead."

"And what do you call him?"

"Le-hev-hev."

"Who is Le-hev-hev?"

"Le-hev-hev means: That which draws us to It so that It may devour us." [1]

Le-hev-hev, the sexless Guardian Ghost.

715

Le-hev-hev is the sexless Guardian Ghost, who bars the way into the land of the dead. As I have stated elsewhere,[2] it is not known on Vao whether this Being is a man or a woman, or indeed something that is neither one nor the other. All that is known about its nature is that it is "irresponsible and in all things defiant." [3] The Vao language does not differentiate between genders, so there is no help from that quarter.

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The first syllable of the name, *Le-*, is the present-day feminine prefix with which every woman's name in all the Small Islands begins. In Atchin the name for the corresponding figure is Le-saw-saw, where it is definitely regarded as a woman, maternal grandmother of the ten petromorphic brothers to whom Ta-har is said to have appeared in a canoe and to whom he introduced food-stuffs and pigs.[4] Owing to the law of sound-change by which Atchin *s* becomes *h* in Vao and *w* is softened to *v*, Le-saw-saw and Le-hev-hev are philologically the same word. The

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, pp. 228-9.
[2] See p. 606 for tale of a man who for this reason called himself Le-hev-hev because he had killed his sister's son.
[3] Layard, 4, p. 119.
[4] See future volume on Atchin.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

Le-hev-hev a bodiless spirit, like Ta-ghar; inspires fear. Connexion with Maki. 776

Let us now see how the Guardian Ghost is regarded in Vao.

"Le-hev-hev," as we have seen, means: "That which draws us to It so that It may devour us."

The next question was:

"You say It wants to eat you? How? With Its teeth?"

"No, not with Its teeth; It is like Ta-ghar, It has no body, It is like a ghost (*ta-mat*). It's terrible. . . . We are in great fear of It, and think only of It; whereas we think but rarely of Ta-ghar. There is no connexion between them. Ta-ghar is one thing and Le-hev-hev another.[1]

"It is to save ourselves from Le-hev-hev that we sacrifice our pigs, that we dance, and that we perform all our rites." [2]

This phrase refers not only to the Maki, but also to every sacrificial rite on the Small Islands, even those ostensibly to individual ancestors, since, as we shall see, one of the essential aspects of the Maki is the attainment of one-ness with this figure who is the embodiment of all ancestors, and the propitiating of it so that the sacrificer may obtain entry into the life after death.[3]

Having now indicated the deeply emotional character of the attitude towards Le-hev-hev, I will here give my own record of the dead man's dealings with Le-hev-hev and of his journey to the land where his deceased forefathers carry on their existence after death.

The Journey of the Dead
(Author's Account) [4]

Summary of elements common to Vao, Atchin and Wala.

775 ● 171

The author obtained three accounts of the Journey of the Dead of high rank, from the three islands of Vao, Atchin and Wala. All three accounts agree that the dead man first enters a cave, close to the long black-sand beach, in Vao called Ghoramp and in Atchin Oraɲ, situated on the Malekulan mainland between the islands of Atchin and Wala. Having passed through this cave he then proceeds down the coast of Malekula to a promontory called Bong-na-un on the Malekulan mainland facing the

[1] Godefroy adds: "Ta-ghar has his own personal occupations, and Le-hev-hev has his which have nothing to do with Ta-ghar." This is, however, not entirely accurate, as will be seen below (see p. 227).

[2] Ibid., I, 1933, p. 229.

[3] See p. 257.

[4] Here reproduced, with minor alterations, by kind permission of Professor C. G. Seligman and Messrs. Kegan Paul, from *Essays Presented to C. G. Seligman*, London, 1934, pp. 119 ff. For best summaries of comparative material see Rivers, I, vol. II, pp. 261 ff. and Williamson, I, chapters on "The Soul after Death," and comparative tables at end of vol. II.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

775 171 island of Ambrim. Here he lights a beacon, to attract the attention of a ghostly ferryman, and is then ferried over to Ambrim, where he mounts the volcano where the dead carry on their blissful existence, dancing all night and, according to the different accounts, either sleeping or becoming disintegrated during the day. Somewhere on the route (the versions differ as to where) the dead man encounters the Guardian Ghost, who tries to eat him, but is placated by the presentation of a pig, placed in the dead man's grave during his mortuary rites, on receipt of which the Guardian Ghost ceases to molest him, and he passes safely on his way.

Chief differences between Vao and other versions.

The three versions differ considerably in detail, notably—

(*a*) In the position of the Guardian Ghost, who in the Vao version is met with in the cave, but in the Wala (and by implication also in the Atchin) version stands in the form of a natural monolithic block on the reef at Bong-na-un.

(*b*) In knowledge of the dead man's doings on the journey, much of which is known on Atchin and Wala, but nothing at all on Vao.

(*c*) In the fact that in the Wala version the dead are said to dance as skeletons and their heads to fall off and their bodies fall asunder at dawn, when the bare bones remain lying on the ground till sundown, when they reassemble to resume their nightly dance. This belief is vehemently denied on Vao, where the natives conceive of their dead as carrying on life in the form of ordinary disembodied ghosts.

VAO VERSION

I will here give the Vao version only.

164 175 *Burial at sundown. Pigs killed for presentation to Le-hev-hev.*

Old men of grades *na-humbe* and *mer-sean* are buried in the squatting position.[1] Burial occurs at sundown, the moment when the nightly dance of the dead begins. The body is arrayed in all the finery and insignia due to the dead man for the rank which he has attained in the Maki rites. Immediately before inhumation, the first of a series of communion feasts is held,[2] in which a morsel of food is placed actually in the mouth of the dead man. The body is wrapped in fine mats, and a live pig thrown into the grave.[3] Though, according to one belief, the dead man immediately joins his ancestors, and is therefore buried at sundown in order that he may forthwith join in the nightly dance, according to another he takes

[1] See Mortuary Rites, p. 531.
[2] See p. 541.
[3] See p. 542.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

five,[1] and according to yet another ten,[2] days to get there. At all events, ten pigs must be sacrificed for his use on the journey. These ten pigs are sacrificed the morning after burial, but, such is the confusion of belief and the necessity that at all hazards he should have at least one pig to give to the Guardian Ghost, lest he should "go away quickly," a further pig is sacrificed immediately after inhumation.[3]

Dead man enters "Cave of the Dead." Is opposed by Le-hev-hev, but Ta-ghar Lawo intercedes. Proceeds to Bong-na-un.

The dead man first makes his way to the long black-sand beach called Ghoramp, where he enters the cave called *barang na ta-mat*, "Cave of the Dead." As he goes in, his way is blocked by Le-hev-hev.

As the ghost of the dead man tries to enter the cave Le-hev-hev pulls him back. But Ta-ghar Lawo, who is also present, takes the side of the new-comer and says to Le-hev-hev, "Leave him alone. Let him come and join all his friends over there," indicating the inside of the cave. Le-hev-hev then leaves hold of the new ghost, who presents It with the ghost of the pig sacrificed at burial. If he had not such a pig, Le-hev-hev would devour him.[4] The new-comer also pays a pig to Ta-ghar Lawo[5] for having pleaded for him, and then goes inside into the cave, to "join his dead friends who are gathered there."

He does not stay, however, but continues on his lonely way for forty-odd miles down the coast until he comes at sundown to the promontory called Tsungon Bong-na-un on the coast of Malekula facing the volcanic island of Ambrim.

Lights beacon. Is ferried to Ambrim and mounts volcano. Nightly dance of the dead.

Arrived at Bong-na-un, the dead man makes fire for a beacon to attract the attention of the ghostly ferryman on Ambrim, and also breaks off a piece of seaweed called *ro-go-rombol*, and beckons with it. At this, the ferryman, named Lingi, sets out from Ambrim in his ghost's canoe. Such ghostly craft are not canoes in anything but name, but simply any kind of flotsam borne by the sea. The name of this canoe was first given as *wuwun*, "banana-skin," but later it appeared that any piece of

[1] This number is also given by Speiser, who says that the soul of the dead man sets out on the fifth day after death (Speiser, 3, p. 322).

[2] In Lambumbu the dead depart by sea on the tenth day after death (Deacon, 4, p. 570).

[3] This is the "death pig" referred to by Godefroy, see p. 233.

[4] *Le-hev-hev e ghani.*

[5] In my account of the mortuary rites, no mention is made of the sacrifice of a second pig for Ta-ghar Lawo. Being of infinitely less importance than that paid to Le-hev-hev, my informant evidently forgot to mention it. This figure clearly corresponds with the Oba *Tagaro-lawua*, "Tagaro the Big" (see Codrington, 3, p. 170).

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OOI2 Malekula OOI2

775 banyan bark or other minute object would serve the ghostly purpose just as well. Lingi, the name given to the ferryman, is a descriptive word used in ordinary conversation as a verb meaning "to lead" or "to conduct," particularly in a canoe. This ferryman now paddles over in his flotsam craft and takes the new-comer back with him to Ambrim, where he is escorted up to the big volcano called Bot-gharambi, "Source (base or origin) of the fire." [1]

The whole journey takes no time at all, for it is still dusk when he arrives, just as the nightly dance of all the dead begins. The new-comer is placed in their midst and all the others dance around him till a famous ghost named Mal-kalaut [2] calls out "*Laus——e*," the customary way in which the leader ends a dance in actual life. Then all the others answer "*Ia*," and the dance is over.

The dance is repeated throughout the night by the dead of all the villages of Vao in turn, in the rotation prescribed for ritual occasions during life, and, as in life, these are succeeded by those from the six Atchin villages, and, more vaguely, by those from the remoter islands of the group.[3]

Nothing more seems to be known on Vao about the life led by the dead, excepting that they dance all night and sleep all day. The Wala story, that the dead dance as skeletons and that their bones fall asunder and their heads fall off at dawn, is vehemently denied.

[1] Seen at night from Vao and the other Small Islands, the light of the volcano on Ambrim, when in eruption, is an impressive sight.

There is a central vent called Marum, but eruptions occur from time to time on other parts of the island, the most disastrous within living memory being that which took place on December 7th, 1913, the year before my arrival on the island, when the Presbyterian Mission Station was destroyed. The summit of the central volcano is about 3300 feet above sea-level. Godefroy describes an ascent he made of it, which contains, however, no details of anthropological interest. Speiser also gives a graphic account of climbing the volcano (Speiser, 2, pp. 217-23).

According to Speiser, who, however, gives no other details of the journey, it is on the way up to the volcano, in a steep narrow path, that the dead man encounters the Guardian Ghost in the form of a crab-like monster with two immense claws. If, on the fifth day after death, the dead man's relatives have sacrificed the correct number of pigs, the pigs' souls trot after him, and the Guardian Ghost eats them instead of him. If no such pigs have been sacrificed, It devours the dead man. It is for this reason also that men are apt to perform certain of their own mortuary rites before they die. (Speiser, 3, pp. 322-3; 1, pp. 68-9.) Compare also the mythological ogress called "The Crab Woman" (Nevin bumba-au) in South-West Bay (p. 730). A similar female crab-like monster appears also in the mythology of New Caledonia. In the island of Pott there is a sacred spot called Tsiabouat, where dwells a female deity called Kabo Mandalat, in the form of a huge hermit crab "the claws of which are as big as the trunk of a coconut palm." It is she who has power both to give and to relieve elephantiasis. She has her own devotees who, with the aid of certain rites, carry out both these functions. Pigs are not offered to her, since there are no pigs in New Caledonia, but other offerings are made. Lambert (pp. 19-23) gives a full-page picture of her.

[2] Mal-kalaut was a man of La-mbarang, one of the four Quarters of Pete-hul, and is famous as the inventor of the use of human bones as arrow-tips.

[3] See p. 299.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

Account of how two Atchin women followed the ghost of a Vao man to Ambrim.

There is a tale told on Wala explaining how it is that the facts concerning the journey of the dead and the life of ghosts are known. This tale concerns a ghost from Vao, but the details belong to the Wala version of the story, and it is told chiefly with a view to pointing out the dire effects that occur from not quickly enough placating a ghost (*te-mets* in the Wala language) called *ni-wet or gnush*, "Nose-devouring Stone," which, in the form of a solitary rock,[1] stands alone in the sea at a place called Wetu, also meaning "Stone," at the southern end of the black-sand beach of Orap. If not duly placated with the gift of a fowl, this Stone rises up and hits the nose of the dead man with its finger, not in order to break it, but to make it flat.[2]

The story states that an old man of Vao died, was adorned as usual for burial with his arm badges, fowls' feathers and other insignia, and set out on his journey to Ambrim.

When he came to a place called Woremet, on the coast opposite Atchin, he was seen by two Atchin women, who were so taken by his finery that they wished to marry him. So they followed him to the "Cave of the Dead," where they saw him gnawing the trunk of a magic tree with red fruit which is a feature in the Wala version of the story. Then they followed him through the cave, and on to where he struck the waters of the river with his wand,[3] and passed through. But when they came to Wetu, the dead man delayed in presenting his fowl, so that the Stone rose up and with its finger struck the dead man's nose so as to make it flat. Then one of the women said to the other, "Now we see that this man is no good. He is no man, but a ghost." But they followed him to Pinalum, where the dead man took off the mats in which he was wrapped. Then they came to the place called Gunsin Te-mets,[4] and all three lit fires on the reef. Shules,[5] the ferryman, saw the fires and paddled

[1] In the Wala version, all ghosts met with, including the Guardian Ghost Le-saw-saw, are said to be petromorphic, and to be represented by natural upright coral blocks.

[2] The undesirability of the nose being flattened would appear to indicate the fact that prominent noses were characteristic of those responsible for the introduction of the myth. Compare the artificial elongation of the nose in Seniang (Layard, 2, pp. 218, 219); also the admiration expressed for the writer's prominent nose recorded on p. 744 of this volume.

[3] In the Wala version of the story, a cane, cut to the exact length of the dead man's body, is buried with him in the grave. This cane, clearly the dead man's "double," becomes a magic wand which the dead man takes with him and with which he parts the waters of rivers encountered on his way. The river here mentioned is the stream which crosses the black-sand beach. At burial a fowl is also killed, for payment to the "Nose-devouring Stone." When the dead man sets out on his journey he slings the wand over his shoulder with the ghost-fowl hanging from the hinder end. (For discussion of this and other features of the Wala and Atchin version see Layard, 4.)

[4] The name of a promontory, meaning "Nose (as promontory, cf. English 'ness') of the Ghosts."

[5] This is the name given to the ferryman on Wala.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

over. And when he saw that it was a Vao man, he paddled back to Ambrim and told all the dead from Vao to come over and fetch the newcomer. This they did, and the two Atchin women went with him to Ambrim. When they arrived there, one of the women was frightened, and said to the other, "I've begged you all the time to go back but you would not, and now you really see that this is not a man, but a ghost; and here we are among nothing but the dead."

And they stayed there seven nights. And every evening, when the crickets [1] began to sing, they saw the bones of the dead join together and become alive, and they watched them dance till their heads fell off at the rising of the morning star. And at dawn after the seventh night the head of the man they had accompanied fell off also.[2]

But now the unusual happened. For the Atchin women must return home, but could not find their way alone. So this man became alive, and said, "I will take you back to Atchin." And he still had his wand. So, having ferried them over to Gunsin Te-mets, he walked northward with them along the coast, and whenever they came to a river he struck the waters with his wand, so that they parted and the three walked through on dry ground. And he went with them till they came to the "Cave of the Dead," where he left them, saying "*Ko reldrel e matur, ko reldrel e mairi*," [3] and himself returned to Ambrim.

The two women returned alone to Atchin, but straightway died. But the Atchin people brought them back to life by kneeling on their chests and suddenly releasing the pressure, so that the breath came back into their bodies.[4]

When they came back to life they related all that they had seen. And that is how it is known that the dead go to Ambrim and that after seven days their heads fall off, and why care is taken to kill a fowl at death and to place a wand with the body in the grave.

Brief analysis of the Vao version of the story into two layers in the earlier of which the dead have their home in the cave.

As I have shown, the Vao version of the story of the dead man's journey to the volcano on Ambrim is much shorter than those told on Atchin and on Wala, and differs from them in several material respects. In the article mentioned above [5] all three versions are told and the various

[1] Called in Wala *bong le muisi*.

[2] This refers to the Wala version mentioned above. The newly arrived ghost's bones do not fall asunder till the seventh night. Seven days represents the probationary period in the newer form of culture existing on Wala, as opposed to the five-day period belonging to the older culture represented on Vao.

[3] The translation of this is doubtful. The dialect is that of Wala. It probably means "he dances from the time of lying down to sleep to the time of rising."

[4] This method of artificial respiration is called, in the language of Wala, *mu wushi luha ni*, "he brings it back."

[5] Layard, 4.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

elements analysed into successive layers of belief. This method of historical analysis will be extended later when the whole of my field-material is in print. For details the reader interested in such matters is referred to the article in question. It is enough here to point out that, of the three versions, that held on Vao is clearly the older, but that even this version is itself composed of two entirely distinct layers. The fact that, in the Vao version, in spite of living on the volcano, the dead are said also to be present in the cave, and that both Le-hev-hev and Ta-ghar Lawo are met with there, is a plain indication that at one time the cave, and not the volcano, must have been the dead man's goal. It is thus clear that the volcano story is later, and superimposed on a previous belief in a home of the dead within the cave. In the Atchin and Wala versions, the dead do in fact go through a cave; but do not meet their dead relatives there, nor yet Le-hev-hev, the position of the Guardian Ghost being in these versions transferred to the Malekulan promontory of Bong-na-un from which the dead are ferried over to Ambrim. This shows a more complete acceptance of the superimposed volcano myth than is held on Vao. The severance from the older story is made more obvious by the complete disappearance of Ta-ghar Lawo, who does not figure in the Wala and Atchin stories.

Godefroy's Account

Let us now turn to Godefroy's account, and find what additional information is to be gained from it.

In the first place, we find immediate confirmation of the analytical method in the study of mythology outlined above in that, according to him, the natives themselves recognise quite clearly a sharp distinction between the two concurrently held conceptions of a home of the dead, on the one hand in a cave and on the other in the volcano on Ambrim.

According to his account there are two separate beliefs, and these two beliefs concern two layers of society. Those who have not taken Maki rank eke out their life after death in caves, while the home of the dead in the volcano is reserved only for those who have attained high rank. According to him, those who go on to the volcano do not enter a cave at all. This seems to me unlikely, since in all the versions I collected the cave is at least passed through on the way. Whether this omission is due to a degradation of belief during the last twenty years, or whether it is real, the existence of the two beliefs side by side confirms even more completely than might have been expected the results of a purely analytical examination of the longer story, and affords conclusive proof that the belief in the home of the dead within the cave is in fact the older, since belief in the volcano myth is quite definitely associated with the later, monolithic, form of Maki.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

VOLCANO

775 *The "Path of Fire."*

I propose now to deal with the additional information regarding the volcano myth.

Godefroy is still questioning Melteg-lil-nale, and says: [1]

"Last year, when the boy Motu died, the women put ten shillings [2] in each of his hands. It was a waste of money. Why did they do it?"

"Oh, no! The money was to buy the fire!"

"What fire?"

"The fire of Le-hev-hev."

"What does that mean: 'buying the fire of Le-hev-hev'?"

"That means that he paid Le-hev-hev not to eat him, but to leave him alone to follow the path of fire."

"Where, then, is Le-hev-hev when your ghost arrives before It, and how does It behave?"

"It is standing upright on the path of fire (the path which leads us to the fire).[3] It throws Itself forward, to devour us, but . . ."

"But what?"

"Why, then, we show It the shillings which we have in our hands and give It the pigs that we have caused to be sacrificed for It; It throws Itself on them and eats them instead of eating us."

"If I understand rightly, does all this mean that you prefer walking in the fire to being devoured by Le-hev-hev?"

"Indeed, yes."

By this, Melteg-lil-nale clearly meant that walking in fire, that is to say, being in the volcano, was the greatest possible bliss, since to the native fire means power and life, and the attainment of life after death in the volcano is the positive goal towards which every native strives. Elsewhere Melteg-lil-nale refers to it as "The great fire of Le-hev-hev, the

[1] Quotations from here to the end of the section on Le-hev-hev are taken from Godefroy, 1, 1933, pp. 228-42.

[2] From the introduction of shillings instead of pigs it will be seen that things are not quite what they were. It is, however, significant that the alteration in material currency has remarkably little effect on belief.

[3] Elsewhere, Melteg-lil-nale more clearly specifies the point at which the dead man meets the Guardian Ghost: "While following the path down the coast of Malekula, those of high rank meet a ghost (*ta-mat*) which bars their way on the long and dangerous promontory which the white men call Amélie. It is to this ghost that the dead men give the shillings placed in their hands: they pay the passage to Ambrim." This would appear to be the point the natives call Bong-na-un. It would appear probable from this that during the twenty years since I was in the Small Islands this part of the Atchin story has spread to Vao. It was certainly not indigenous when I was there. Such an adoption of Atchin belief would be in complete accord with the tendency to adopt Atchin forms which was a marked feature of Vao culture then, and of which many examples are seen in this book.

1: Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

fire of chiefs. . . . It is there that (Le-hev-hev) sends the ghosts of chiefs,[1] of *na-humbe*."

Nor is there any fear, or even thought, of being burnt in it, as the following question and answer show:

"Do your ancestors tell you that this fire burns them?"

"No."[2]

Old men of Wala and Rano try to "bring back the fire" from Ambrim to Malekula.

Godefroy recounts how, "about the year 1903, some old men of Wala and Rano took it into their heads to go to Ambrim to buy the 'fire' and 'bring it back' to the mountain which dominates their two islets," which he refers to as "Lalemp,[3] on the mainland of Malekula. They had (in their opinion) every justification for saying 'bring back,' because, they said, there used to be a 'fire' on Lalemp, but the men of Ambrim had stolen it in order to augment the power of theirs. For this purpose they organised a convoy of sea-going canoes loaded with pigs with which to buy the fire and for their own food during the voyage. . . . Having sailed a mile and a half, till they were off the promontory of Pinalum, haunt of ghosts from all that part of Malekula, these latter raised such protestations and unleashed the winds and sea with such success that the flotilla put about and came home. . . . So the fire of Ambrim remained on Ambrim."

Life on the volcano.

Godefroy makes no mention of the all-night dancing on the volcano, his only reference to the life of the dead on Ambrim being to the "eternal palavers" which the ghosts are said to hold.

The "Death Pig"

I have already referred to the pig sacrificed at death "in case the dead should go away quickly." Godefroy adds some useful information about

[1] Cf. footnote on p. 220. Chiefs in the usually accepted sense of the word do not exist in the Small Islands, though it is a common habit with all white men to call all old men of influence by this name, which is, historically speaking, not far from the truth, since the Maki is clearly a chiefly hierarchy which in these islands has become plutocratic.

[2] Melteg-lil-hale perceives, however, that his interlocutor has an eye on extracting a parallel between the fire of the volcano and the fires of hell, and being, like all natives, a polite man, adds: "But they say that those who are in the fire are always angry, and that is why they are always wishing to harm us." This statement, however, is dragged out of its context and refers, not to those who have attained the glory of the volcano, but to those killed in battle and thus have no proper burial, and appear as will-o'-the-wisps to harm those left behind. See p. 235, footnote.

[3] This is not the native name of the mountain, but that of a village on its slopes, mistaken by the Admiralty surveyors for that of the mountain itself. For this and other mistakes in geographical nomenclature, and an explanation of how they occurred, see Layard, 5, p. 342, note.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

this. He quotes a native saying, "After my death I must at all costs rejoin the souls of my ancestors. I can attain this only if Le-hev-hev lets me through, and It will let me through if I present my 'death pig.'" [1]

Therefore, "Every native, however poor, possesses a pig destined to be sacrificed and eaten on the day of his death. Children acquire theirs on the fortieth day after birth, at the time when their hair is cut. If they should happen to die before this, their relatives would sacrifice a small pig for them, just as for a grown man. The small pig given to a little child is destined to grow up with it. . . . I have several times seen certain very young pigs wandering around their houses, with the appearance of being completely domesticated. When I asked whom they belonged to, I would be told, for instance, that a given animal belonged to, say, L——. But this L—— was a baby only three months old. After several enquiries of this kind, I learned that every man on Vao, whether he be a new-born babe or an old man, has such a 'personal' pig. If the animal dies before its owner, it is replaced by another. It is his own inalienable property, and destined to be sacrificed at the death of its owner.

"It sometimes happens that a native changes his abode; sometimes his clan; much more rarely his tribe. He hesitates for a long time; but the day when, at last, he moves his 'death pig,' one may be sure that on that day he has definitely moved." [2]

Dependence on kinsfolk for sacrifice. No moral considerations.

"Everyone knows that after death he will have to do only [3] with Le-hev-hev; that is why this pig never leaves him: present or absent from his own country, his relatives will sacrifice it 'for his death.'"

Godefroy speaks of the sacrifice of this pig as "the necessary passport" if a dead man would set his feet on the road to the volcano. There is no moral test, nor is there, naturally, any question of what a man may or may not have done during his life. There is "only one great misfortune to fear: that of being devoured by Le-hev-hev. . . . To suffer this awful fate is not to be punished for crimes; it is simply to be the victim of a fatal negligence [i.e. in the unheard of case of a man's kinsfolk omitting to perform the sacrifice], the victim of a ferocious beast which seeks to devour us. But . . . from the moment that a man is in possession of a 'death pig' he seems without fear; in fact, each man has his pig ready to be sacrificed, in case of misfortune, on his tomb." "One thing is enough

[1] *nuku mbo na matean na nuk*, literally, "my pig for my death."

[2] "In the same way, when a native decides to leave his village to take up his abode with the Père at the Mission, one is never certain about his sincerity till the day when this man arrives at the enclosure preceded by his 'death pig.'"

[3] Godefroy is here emphasising the fact that Le-hev-hev has complete control over the dead, with whom Ta-ghar has nothing whatever to do. (Compare, however, his intercession with Le-hev-hev in the cave, which Godefroy does not record.)

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

to assure the peace of the dead man in the other life; that his pig should be sacrificed at his death."

Sacrifice for presentation to Le-hev-hev, as company for the dead man and for his food. Coconut trees cut down for his drink.

The "death pig" is not, however, the only one to be sacrificed during the early days of the mortuary rites. According to Melteg-lil-nale, the ghostly journey to Ambrim lasts ten days, "during which we sacrifice in the dancing-ground all the dead man's pigs, so that he shall not be devoured by Le-hev-hev, and so that he shall have company on the way."

"Thus, those which we kill on the day of his death are sacrificed so that Le-hev-hev may let him pass through and follow the 'path of fire.'"

On the other hand, "those which we kill during the following days are to supply the ghost of the dead man with food. For his drink we cut down ten coconut trees growing on his ground. We eat the flesh of the pigs which we have sacrificed; but we do not touch the coconuts; these we leave to serve as drink for the dead man."

Pigs for Le-hev-hev and all ghosts to eat, so that they shall not trouble the living. Vengeful activities of neglected ghosts.

We have seen how Melteg-lil-nale said, at the beginning of this account, "It is to save ourselves from Le-hev-hev that we sacrifice our pigs, that we dance, and that we perform all our rites." He also says, however, "We sacrifice them so that the ghosts shall not molest us; they make ceaseless demands for pigs to eat."

Note here the identification of all ghosts of those of high rank with Le-hev-hev referred to on p. 220.

This brave account of the number of pigs sacrificed, though true in respect of the enormous numbers of pigs sacrificed during the Maki rites, is not quite so true of those sacrificed on other occasions, when commercial greed vies jealously with ancestral duty. In this case "the ghosts often come back to torment us, their relatives on Vao, but do not molest strangers. They come to reproach our avarice in respect of sacrifices which, though bound to perform them, we do so but meanly. For example, when one of our kinsmen dies, it is our duty to sacrifice and eat all his pigs. But instead of sacrificing them all, we content ourselves with sacrificing perhaps only a third or quarter of them, dividing the rest among ourselves. Then the ghosts come in fury: some suddenly appear to us all red,[1] move before us for a moment and suddenly go, leaving us full of terror. Others often hide in the tops of trees, close to their graves, and,

[1] According to my notes, it is only the ghosts of those slain in battle, and who have thus no resting-place, that appear thus as will-o'-the-wisps. These ghosts are called *ta-mat oamp*, "fiery ghosts." See p. 631 and footnote p. 233.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

764 775 at night, attack those of us who come within their reach with a shower of pebbles and of small unripe fruit; or else they set themselves to sighing and weeping in a manner so sad, so sad, that we take fright and flee. Others seize us violently by the arm or shoulder and shake us. During the month following a burial we tremble with fright!" Elsewhere, he says, "Sometimes they stand upright on a path, as if coming to meet us: the apparition whirls round like a tornado of fire: it is all red, but only lasts a moment."

Mortuary rites sometimes performed before death.

764 764 To such a pitch has the fear of revengeful ghosts, combined with the desire to witness oneself the magnificence of one's own mortuary rites, reached, that it is not unknown for a powerful man actually to perform his own mortuary rites before his death.[1] Thus Godefroy tells us: "Meltelum is the happiest man on earth, since, feeling himself ageing, he has already performed his own mortuary rites three years ago. Observing the infirmities of age creeping upon him, and having only limited confidence in his kinsfolk's piety, this cunning old man who had so often deceived his compatriots took it into his head one fine day to order the performance of his obsequies and to sacrifice all his 'death pigs.' He is now well assured that the blessing of the Ambrim fire is accorded to him in advance; he knows he will not be eaten by Le-hev-hev, but that he will have the good fortune and the honour of going to take part in the endless palavers of his ancestors. Now, he has nothing to do but wait; and," says the reverend father, not with *arrière-pensée*, "he thinks less than ever about Ta-ghar up in the moon, or about Le-hev-hev who has already eaten his pigs. So, every day now he is to be seen strolling down the path towards the sea, his face cheery and uppish in spite of his age. He has indeed attained the summit of joy in respect of duty done and pride well satisfied."

764 The rites referred to above are almost certainly the feast called *matean*, described on pp. 544 ff. Melteg-tò, of the village of Ruruar on Atchin, went so far as to build for himself a huge stone mausoleum in the shape of a shark, and to perform similar rites long before his death, the consequences of which will be described in a future volume.

The Cave

775 *Each Small Island has its appropriate cave on the mainland for those of low rank; said to contain fire.*

I have already mentioned that, according to Godefroy's account of beliefs now held on Vao, twenty years since I was there, the ghosts of

[1] See p. 545.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

175

those of high rank who go to the volcano do not previously go through the cave, but meet Le-hev-hev "standing upright on the 'path of fire.'" The belief in the cave as the final habitation of the dead applies, on the other hand, only to those who have not taken Maki rank.

Thus, in the words of Melteg-lil-nale, "The ghosts of the common people, that is to say those who have not taken Maki rank, do not go to the volcano on Ambrim, they remain close to their own country, the Small Islands. Among the rocky indentations of the coast [of the big island of Malekula], at those spots which appear most wild, we find small caves, like houses: it is in these that Le-hev-hev, with the help of Its assistants, keeps our dead kinsfolk imprisoned.

"Those from Wala and Rano find their home [in caves] on the impressive promontory of Pinalum. . . .[1]

"Those from Atchin inhabit the caves situated to the right of the great black-sand beach [Orap]. . . .

"Those from Vao go to the coast facing the island, towards North Cape, into very small caves."

Just as there seems to be, however, considerable confusion as to who remains in these caves and who does not (for, as will be seen when we come to discuss the Maki, the distinction between ranks is now very slight), so also the idea of fire seems, by analogy, to have penetrated the notion of a home of the dead of "commoners" in caves. Thus, Melteg-lil-nale is reported as saying, "Our ancestors went there [into the caves] to see them, and told us that they saw them walking in the fire. This fire is not made of big flames like those of which the White Men speak, but is like a mass of sparks, or a small fire running among dry leaves which have fallen to the ground. It irritates continually; but it does not make them suffer like that of your Satan."[2]

[1] "The end of this promontory is made of great coral blocks which the waves caused by the trade winds have perforated in a remarkable way . . . [honeycombing them with caves] . . . When the sea here is rough it is because the ghosts are hungry for yams, bananas and taro. The moment the voyager throws them provisions, the sea becomes calm, or else the wind is immediately made to blow from the desired quarter. If, on the other hand, this satisfaction is refused them, or else the voyager finds himself genuinely without provisions, then they revenge themselves by barring the way or, in these latter days, capsizing the motor launches of the white infidels. . . . [A good maxim is] 'never sail past Pinalum without having a good store of yams aboard'" (Godefroy, I, 1932, pp. 223-4).

[2] Throughout his dialogue, the reverend father is naturally on the look-out on the one hand for analogies and on the other for differences between Christian and native dogma. Le-hev-hev is thus considered as closely approximating to Satan, and the volcanic fires with those of hell. Godefroy, however, is quite clear on the fact that, though there exist certain similarities with the Christian dogma in the main characters of Ta-ghar and Le-hev-hev, and in the existence of fire as the main feature of the life after death which is connected exclusively with Le-hev-hev, the two systems of belief do not bear comparison in details. Most clearly is this shown in the complete failure to elicit, from however willing an informant, any admission that the fire is harmful.

1:Layard, E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

(C) BEINGS CALLED HAMBALEV OR AMBALEV

(a) *In the caves, guarding the dead.*

In the last section were mentioned certain "assistants" employed by Le-hev-hev to keep the dead of "common people" in the caves to which they go after death. These so-called "assistants" are all aspects of a Being whose name as spelt by Godefroy is *Ambalev*, or *Hambalev*, but the name of whose order I recorded on Atchin as *Ghamba Lep*. Of those ghosts that live in caves, those from each of the Small Islands appear to be under the surveillance of a different aspect of this Being. Thus, according to Melteg-lil-nale,

Ghosts from Wala and Rano living in caves on the promontory of Pinalum are guarded by *Ambalev marelemrek*.

Ghosts from Atchin inhabiting the caves of Orap are detained by *Ambalev malavame*.

Ghosts from Vao inhabiting caves towards North Cape are looked after by *Ambalev martembur*.[1]

(b) *Prowling along the path to carry off the living to be eaten by Le-hev-hev.*

On the other hand, he says, "We have never seen either Ta-ghar or Le-hev-hev, but we have often seen this one's assistants." Elsewhere he speaks of "*Hambalev*, Le-hev-hev's assistant, who prowls along the paths: we hardly have time to see him before he is upon us: he makes us die of fright and takes us to his master, who immediately devours us." . . . He is the most terrible of ghosts.

"All the same," remarked Godefroy, "I have never yet heard speak of anyone falling victim to *Hambalev*."

"That's true," replied his tactful informant. "But we know that wherever the reverend Fathers live, *Hambalev* very rarely comes."

(D) GHAMBA LEP

These last quotations clearly envisage this Being as attacking not the dead, but the living. This is the character attributed in the Small Islands to a specialised type of flying trickster inhabiting certain villages on the mainland of Malekula between Norsup and the reefy bay south of Uri, whose activities I have described elsewhere.[2]

[1] Godefroy, *l.*, 1933, p. 234. The names of these *Ambalev* appear to be topographical, since the name of the first, *Ambalev marelemrek*, is probably an amalgamation of the word *mara* meaning "man" and Limwerek, the name of the chief mainland village that the *Buili* are said to inhabit. In the same way *malavame* probably means "man of Lavame," another mainland village of which a few survivors are now on Vao. The third name *martembur* probably means "man of Tembur," indicating some other village I do not know of.

[2] Layard, 3.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

attention is devoted to preparing for the elaborate mortuary rites rather than towards seeking any kind of so-called "supernatural" causation. In all other cases, except where caused by an obvious wound, sickness and death are ascribed to supernatural causes, chief among which are some act of malignant magic (though this is much rarer in the Small Islands than in most other parts of Malekula), or the fact that the sick man has in some way offended the ghost of a departed kinsman or else has been wantonly attacked out of sheer blind revenge by the ghost of some man who has been killed in battle and therefore roams the world in search of victims.

In all such cases a diviner is needed to diagnose the cause, that is to say to discover what sorcerer or ghost is responsible for the sick man's condition. If a sorcerer, the only cure is to persuade him by threats or payment to remove by counter-magic the sickness that he has caused. If a ghost, it must first be discovered what individual ghost it is. For this purpose a practitioner (*mara man*) is called in who, looking at the sick man, sings to himself a special song and by this means finds out what ghost has entered into him. Then he tells the patient who the ghost is.

(*a*) *Ghost of a kinsman.*

In almost all cases, such an initial diagnosis will point to the fact that the ghost (*ta-mat*) in question is that of a departed relative [1] offended at the omission of some ritual act or at the commission of some accidental slight. In this case the practitioner tells the patient whose ghost it is, and says, "I think you must have done him some wrong, to cause him to enter into you in this way." The sick man then thinks it over, and remembers something or other that he has done that must have offended this particular ghost. The practitioner then tells the son or brother of the sick man to bring a leafy branch of the kind called *rumbu log-log*, and when brought places it in the sick man's right hand to hold. When the sick man has held it for a little time, the child or brother takes the branch from him and places it on the grave of the offended ghost, and addresses him, saying, "You have gone into this man; come out from him now. You have made him sick; if you leave him now he will recover." Then he lays a money-mat (*mangau*) on the grave and ties a pig to it as an offering. The size of the pig depends on the importance of the ghost and on the gravity of the disease. If the sick man gets well, the pig is subsequently removed. If he remains sick, the pig is left there until the patient either gets well or dies.

(*b*) *Ghost of one slain in battle.*

It is, however, possible that the diagnosis points to the fact that the ghost that has entered in is that of a man who has died a violent death.

[1] This may be from either side of his family. Instances given include the brother, father, father's father and mother's brother.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

Ghosts of this kind are known by a special name, *ta-mat oamp*, or "fiery ghost," from their habit of wandering about the bush looking at night like a red will-o'-the-wisp. Such ghosts may act in one of two ways. On the one hand they may enter into the body of a kinsman, just like any ordinary ghost, in order to punish him for some wrong he may have committed. On the other hand, a ghost of this type, especially if his body was carried off by the enemy and eaten and he therefore received no proper burial or mortuary rites and thus cannot reach the land of the dead, will wander about the bush seeking whom he may destroy, and, seeing some stranger whom he "does not know," will enter into him as an enemy and cause sickness or death. If his relatives had succeeded in bringing home his body and giving it a proper grave, the procedure in case of sickness caused by his ghost is the same as for that caused by the ghost of a man who has died an ordinary death. But if he was taken by the enemy and eaten and so has no grave, the relatives of the sick man whom he has maliciously entered take a branch of the *rumbu log-log* to the place where he was killed and, making there a small fire, roast upon it a special kind of yam called *la-las*.[1] This yam is red and, like the will-o'-the-wisp, symbolises violent death. (My informant Ma-taru, once a Mission teacher, compared it with the wine of the Sacrament which by its redness signifies the blood of Christ.) Then they address the ghost of the slain, just as an ordinary ghost is addressed, and holding a communion feast over the grave, leave a portion of the yams as an offering to it.

My informant Ma-taru assured me that the cure was infallible. The only trouble, he said, was that sometimes the practitioner is mistaken in his diagnosis, and, the offerings having been made to the wrong ghost, naturally the man dies.

(*c*) *A man's sickness may also be caused by an offence committed by his wife.*

Ma-taru's own father, Ter-ter-mal, was a *ta-mat oamp*, having been slain during the course of a quarrel between two Tolamp Lodges. The warring factions being so closely related, his body had been recovered and given decent burial. The following instance shows how a ghost of this type may function just like any ordinary ancestral ghost visiting sickness on his descendant for some fault committed, and shows also how a man may suffer not only for his own fault but also for that of his wife. Ma-taru used to suffer from some periodical illness every year. One day he spoke to a friend on the mainland, who looked at him and said, "I see. The spirit of your father Ter-ter-mal is doing this. Your wife has done something that has displeased him. You had better make her give you a pig and a piece of kava root and a *rumbu log-log* branch and go and put them on his grave, and you will recover." He did so, and got well. His pigs also used to be constantly dying, so on the advice of this same main-

[1] Atchin *letsi-lets*.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
OO12 Malekula OO12

lander he placed these three types of offering on his father's grave, and thenceforth they prospered.[1]

(2) Cures due to Removal of Evil Influence by Other Means

If these methods fail, then the same or some other practitioner is called in to deal more specifically with the sick man's trouble by means of further magical acts, which include the administration of potions made by infusing leaves in hot water, or hot fomentations,[2] blood-letting or massage. In all cases, as is quite evident in the case of blood-letting, the purpose of these acts appears to be to remove the evil influence injected by the offended ghost. In the case of massage the evil influence is often extracted by the magician in the shape of some material object such as a stone or a snake. These symbols, both more or less world-wide in therapeutic magic, are highly significant. The stone often appears in the dream-language of Europeans to represent a hard core in the psyche causing sickness which can only be cured by its removal by means of psycho-therapeutic treatment.

The snake also is a well-known psychological symbol. In religious terminology it frequently represents the devil which has to be exorcised, or quite literally "driven out." In this case the driving out is spiritually conceived, whereas the native magician claims actually to remove the object from the patient's body. How far the native practitioner who, we can but conclude, himself produces these objects in concrete form, is aware of what they mean is a matter that has never, so far as I know, been investigated, since the attitude of investigators has been up to the present that these symbols are of no importance and that the whole performance is designed simply to trick the gullible patient. So far as the patient is concerned, however, we may assume that he fully believes that the object in question was a manifestation of the ghostly influence that had entered into him, and its removal in apparently concrete form is doubtless in many cases sufficient to perform a cure.

[1] An experience of my own shows, not only how unwittingly a man may offend a ghost, but also how easy it is even for a white man to get caught up in this belief. I had taken one morning, in excellent light, a photograph of the grave of an old man named Melteg-rush, here reproduced in Plate XXI. That afternoon, while I was working with my informant, I was seized with an attack of fever. He immediately said, "I knew that was coming. Didn't you see a small bird called *se-higho* with a white breast and blue tail sitting on a branch and screaming at you this morning while you were taking that photo? That was Melteg-rush's ghost, and he has entered into you and given you fever." That night, in high fever, I found myself thinking what a fool I had been to have taken the photograph in such bad light, as it would only result in wasting a plate. Next morning I realised the reason of my self-reproaches. I must be half-believing in my informant's reasoning. The test would be whether the exposure *was* taken in bad light or good. The photograph turned out to be perfectly good.

[2] Similar to these used after incision (see pp. 509 ff.).

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

531 skill affording at the same time a certain artistic pleasure. Subsequently Deacon recorded a great number from South-West and West Malekula, Ambrim and Oba.[1] In Laravat on the West coast of Malekula the designs are called *rolu*, and in Seniang *ni-tûs*, from the verb *tûs*, to "draw" or "paint," used today by Mission natives to designate the writing of Europeans.[2] Their importance in Seniang may be gauged by the fact

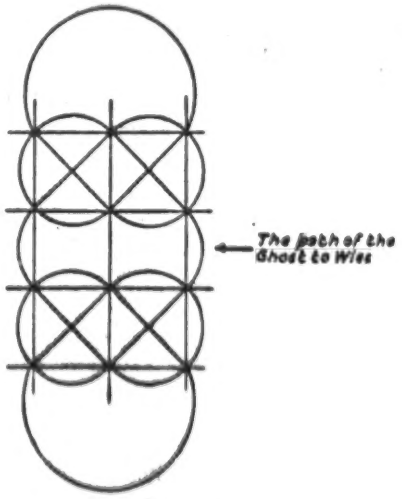

FIG. 61

Sand-tracing from Seniang called "The Path," representing the design drawn by the female Guardian Ghost, Temes Savsap, in the sand. As the dead man approaches she rubs out half the figure. The dead man must know how to complete it, and then walks through it to the land of the dead. If he cannot complete it, the Guardian Ghost eats him. (Deacon, 5, Fig. 52; Layard, 6, Fig. 9.)

that *ni-tûs* is one of the four things by which a man may swear when making promissory oaths.[3] Deacon says "each design is regarded . . . 531 as a kind of maze," and found that in the Seniang district in South-West 775 Malekula they were all connected with a special design called "The Path" (Fig. 61), the drawing of which was an essential item in the journey followed by the ghost of every dead man to the land of the dead. According to this belief, "Ghosts of the dead . . . pass along a 'road' to Wies, the land of the dead. At a certain point on their way they come to a rock . . . lying in the sea . . . but formerly it stood upright. The land of

[1] Deacon, 5. [2] Ibid., 5, p. 191. [3] Ibid., 4, p. 48.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
0012 Malekula 0012

the dead is situated vaguely in the wooded open ground behind this rock and is surrounded by a high fence. Always sitting by the rock is a female [guardian] ghost, [called] Temes Savsap,[1] and on the ground in front of her is drawn the completed geometrical figure known as *Nahal*,[2] 'The Path.' The path which the ghost must traverse lies between the two halves of the figure.

"As each ghost comes along the road the guardian ghost hurriedly rubs out one half of the figure. The ghost now comes up, but loses his track and cannot find it. He wanders about searching for a way to get past the Temes [Guardian Ghost] of the rock, but in vain. Only a knowledge of the completed geometrical figure can release him from this impasse. If he knows this figure, he at once completes the half which Temes Savsap rubbed out; and passes down the track through the middle of the figure. If, however, he does not know the figure, the Temes, seeing he will never find the road, eats him, and he never reaches the abode of the dead."[3]

Sand-tracings represent labyrinths.

It is not within the province of this book to discuss this statement in detail. Subsequent research, based partly on an analysis of the designs themselves and partly on a comparative study of mythology and mortuary rites over a wide field, has shown, however, that the design called "The Path" is in fact a degraded form of labyrinth such as, in ancient Egypt and elsewhere, stood before the tomb representing the entrance to the future life. It is for this reason that it is described how the ghost "loses his track and cannot find it," how he "wanders about," and how "only a knowledge of the completed geometrical figure can release him from this impasse." The whole subject of these designs, together with that of the *na-leng* maze-dances described on pp. 336-9 with which they are closely associated, has been fully discussed in my paper on *Maze-Dances and the Ritual of the Labyrinth in Malekula* published in *Folk-Lore*, vol. XLVII, June 1936, to which the reader should refer for a more detailed analysis.

Labyrinth mythology connected with older layer in the beliefs regarding the Journey of the Dead, corresponding to those held in ancient Egypt.

It is, however, necessary to a proper understanding of the mythology underlying the Small Island designs to make two points clear. In the first place, it will be remembered that the beliefs concerning the Journey of the Dead in the Small Islands are divided into two cultural layers, in

[1] *Temes* means "ghost" (Vao *ta-mat*, Atchin *ta-mats*). Savsap is the same word as is used for the Guardian Ghost in the Small Islands, namely Le-saw-saw in Atchin, Le-hev-hev in Vao (see p. 219).

[2] A widespread word used with the same meaning in many parts of Malekula: Vao *na-hal*, Atchin *ni-sel*.

[3] Deacon, 5, p. 130.